Vol. 4 No. 23. 9th October 1919

THE Hindu Message

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

Reg: No. M. 1314.

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THE HINDU MESSAGE.

Contents of No. 23.

1. A Vision of India. Trees as Heavenward Helpers (A Poem) By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L. 373
2. The Study of Indian History and its place in Indian Culture. 374
3. Notes and Comments. 376
4. Essays on the Bhagavad-Gita. By the Hon'ble V. K. Ramanujachariar. 378
5. Sandhya Upasana.—By Radnus B Divard. 380
6. Bhagavad Gita with an English exposition—K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L. 384
7. Mr. Jadunath Sarkar and Shivaji's Caste.—By G Harischandra Row. 385
8. Mr. Pavjee's Quest of Origins. By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L., 386
9. A Tug at a Solo.—V. R. Hari. 387
10. Olla Podrida. 388

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THE

"HINDU MESSAGE"

A Weekly Review of Indian and World-Problems from the Hindu Standpoint.

Editor: T. K. Balasubrahmanya Aiyar B.A.

VOL. 4.] THURSDAY OCTOBER 9, 1919. [No. 23.

The **Hindu Message** stands for

(1) The Maintenance of British supremacy with self-government for India,

(2) Co-operation with the different communities of India without prejudice to Hindu Dharma,

(3) Education of the Hindus as an integral part of the Indian Nation,

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A Vision Of India.

TREES AS HEAVENWARD HELPERS.

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

What Godward aspirations bring these trees !
Bilwa the symbol of the blessed three :
Fair Thulasi with fragrant ecstacy :
The Darbha pure which brings sin's full surcease :
Ah these and others teach us lives of peace,
Of calmness full of Nature's harmless glee
Beneath the sweet and rhythmic melody
Of season's changes which bring life's increase.
They serve with joy the living universe
And place their offerings in a thousand shrines
By gifts of leaves and fruits and radiant flowers.
Of them Rudraksha sung in holy verse
Gives berries which are piety's chosen signs
And bear thoughts Godward through the praying hours.

The Hindu Message

THURSDAY EVENING OCT. 9, 1919.

The Study of Indian History and its place in Indian Culture.

The past history of every great community is of immense value both as a guide and as an inspiration. Macaulay once declared that "no past event has any intrinsic importance." But the revelation of personality is always interesting and often inspiring. Thomas Arnold has said well that history "is the biography of a society." But it is more. It is the interpretation of the social personality. It is a form of thought. It is the result of the present seeking to reveal the past to perfect the future. It is a science in that it aims at objective truth and the revelation of the real inter-relatedness of events. In a science we are not concerned with the picturesque pleasure-giving aspects of things or their relation to present utilities but with things as they actually are when seen in the dry light of the intellect. The casual connections and sequences of past events are the special province of history. In human history we have not merely the great movements of racial life but also the great uplifts and deflections of such life by individual genuises. Though both factors are really due to the potent agency of a something not ourselves making for righteousness, yet we have to disentangle the various factors of history to appraise their true value and significance. The great men are partly the products of the present age and partly the makers of the new age. Further, the influence of social and economic causes in precipitating human events have also to be investigated. There is also a large element of accident in human history which defies generalisation.

But this scientific aspect of history is not its only aspect. The picturesqueness of the past is an intellectual as well as an emotional asset. History as a pageant is no less valuable than history as a science. The imagination has at least as large a place in life as the intellect. Hence we must attend to this aspect of history in as full a measure as its scientific aspect.

The most valuable of all the lessons of history are that of the unity of human life through the hastening centuries and that of the wonderful continuity of change. By this means we are led up to a clear comprehension of the world and eventually to a realisation of the Omnipotence that directs things to great predestined ends. Among other and minor benefits we may mention our ability to view social and political questions with deeper vision and greater detachment. History takes us out of the ruts of the present and enables us to better the path ahead of us. It improves our moral nature by its description of the results of good and evil acts. Henry St. John says: "History is philosophy teaching by examples how to conduct ourselves in all the situations of private and public life." Lord Acton has said in noble words that the main value of history is the development of moral judgment and the deepening of the sense of moral law. Bishop Stubbs says that one of the best and most valuable results to be obtained through the study of history is the attainment of a "perception of the workings of

the Almighty Ruler of the world" and a recognition of "a hand of justice and mercy, a hand of progress and order, a kind and wise disposition, ever leading the world on to the better but never forcing, and out of the evil of man's working continually that which is good." The improvement of personal and social life depends on the quality of human desire and the direction of human will because these determine human conduct. History points to large issues and great results, shows the vital inter connections of life, and makes us realise that human life is a complex yet harmonious whole, and by this means it prevents us from losing ourselves in our routine rounds of soulless toil and petty pleasures. Mr. J. W. Allen says well about this aspect: "It should counteract the tendency to bury our lives in the merely personal. It should crucify pitilessly against an enormous background the meanness of all mean things. It should widen our sympathies along with our understanding."

The history of each society eventually leads up to the study of humanity which itself ought to lead up eventually to the contemplation of God. It ought to create a spirit of co-operation among the various races of men because their activities are really co-operent to a great end and are really controlled by a Power not ourselves which makes for righteousness. The procession of increasing knowledge and power is the grandest and most permanent of universal events. Power depends not only on knowledge but also on co-operation and on moral life.

History is further related to the present and the future in a more direct and intimate way as well. As Mr. Hearnshaw says well in a recent book. "History serves three pre-eminent functions in the education of the citizen: it provides a school of political method; it supplies an inexhaustible store of examples and precedents; and it furnishes indispensable knowledge of the antecedents of present-day problems." (*Main Currents Of European History*) It is now felt in the West that while ancient history is a valuable school of political method as its controversies have cooled and could be studied dispassionately and while mediaeval history is rich in examples and precedents, the modern citizen has to concentrate upon modern history. The unity of Europe is realised when we study it in the light of the whole of European history. The political unity of the Roman Empire and the ecclesiastical unity of the middle ages are but antecedent phases of the modern unity of culture and civilisation. The recent great war followed by the great peace has brought us near to the Commonwealth of Europe and a little nearer to the "Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World."

Thus history is not merely the sum total of the lives of a few heroes or a mere record of the rise and fall of dynasties. We must learn from it not only the potency of ideas, or the socio-psychological factors in historic causation in which passion and emotion have been more predominant than insight and love, or the economic rise and fall of groups of men, or the growth and decline of political life in organised civic communities. We must attain to a synthetic view of the religious, moral, intellectual, social, economic, and political aspects of human life in its ceaseless and continuous change and progression.

If such is the value of history and

its place in culture, it goes without saying that for us Indians to whom for generations that door of culture was denied and who have wider responsibilities in the future than even in the past it is of vital importance. Though we must study the history of the world, it is after all Indian history that is of the greatest value and significance to us. India is full of vast materials for a true and faithful history of her achievements, and a syndicate of devoted and patriotic Indian scholars must devote itself to this task of the revelation of India to herself and to the world. In modern Indian education a low place is assigned to the study of Indian history. In modern Indian literary effort a very small place alone has been accorded to the writing of Indian history. If we are to enter into the new era with the glad and confident tread of a nation coming into her own, if our beloved land is to shine forth like the morning star of the nations of the world, one of the most potent forces in the new transformation will certainly be the writing and study of Indian History. Will our brethern rise to the height of the occasion?

Notes and Comments.

The French statesman and leader, M. Clemenceau professes a philosophy of which the contents are given as follows:—"Its central idea is the tragic one of the great vital conflict which pervades the world, has always pervaded it, and must ever remain unaffected by the superficial improvements of civilisation. All through the universe the various living organisms are in a condition of ceaseless conflict. Everywhere something conquers something else which is conquered, and life sustains itself and ensures its own permanence by spreading death around it. Life, in fact, depends on death for its sustaining energy, and the fiercer the passion of vitality the more vehemently flourishes the instinct of destruction." This is nothing but a reproduction of the fundamental principle of Darwinism. We now see the source of the inspiration for the future reconstruction of the world,—the reconstruction in which universal self-determination is to prevail. Self-determination may tend either to conflict or to conciliation. If France is to lead the future evolution of humanity, we can easily foresee which kind of self-determination will prevail. That Clemenceau's, and not Wilson's, was the guiding spirit of the Paris treaties has by this time become abundantly clear to all who can understand the course of events now taking place in all quarters of the world. Collisions followed by carnage are occurring everywhere, and "eternal warfare is the symbol of the instinct of self-preservation." And, surely, self-determination implies self-preservation and *vice versa*.

***

M. Clemenceau is also, curiously enough, stated to feel a sympathy for the "ancient gods" of the Greeks and Romans,—for Apollo, Jove, and especially for Pan. Mr. Edmund Gosse says:—"For M. Clemenceau, Pan is the symbol of life in its harmonious and composite action, and science is the intelligent worship of Pan." The sky, and the sea, the earth and fire, are Pan's limbs; and so the scientific men who investigate and conquer the forces of nature are truly Pan's worshippers. Thus the pagan revival today seems to foreshadow the coming age, even as the pagan revival of the Renaissance fore-shadowed the coming on of the Revolutionary Epoch of the Eighteenth century. M. Clemenceau's view is that in nature there is nothing moral or beneficent, but only an interaction and conflict of forces. It is no wonder that Mr. Gosse says of him:—He fought in literature exactly as he has fought in politics, with the air of one who had no wish to conciliate his opponent, but always to browbeat him, to crush him by the weight of his argument, and then run him through the body with his irony." "He is an acrobat incessantly flinging himself with aerial lightness into some

impossible position." M. Clemenceau is over seventy-eight years old, and yet his brain and body are as indefatigable and elastic as ever, and his is the greatest of all the combative and gladiatorial forces working today in the arena of the world's politics. The Hindu Vedantin, on the other hand, has always stood up for "conciliatory co-ordination,"—to use the happy phrase coined by the late eminent scholar and savant, Prof. M. Rangacharya. The Vedantin has witnessed countless revolutions in opinion, manners, and government. But will he survive the coming overflow of the destructive forces let loose on humanity by the fearless followers of Pan-worship in its renovated form of Darwinism and the deification of the forces of nature "red in tooth and claw"?

***

In a recent English Novel—"The Experiment by Horace Newte"—a female character speaks a good deal of common sense regardiug the Western conception of love. Her speech is addressed to the leading character—the hero—of the story whose rapid passages from one object of "love" to another bring out a very unlovely feature of the Western system of marriage of which most of our *novi homines* are so enamoured. The remarks we quote are well worth pondering. They are :—"Love at your age (about 25) is largely a matter of a pretty face, a graceful figure, and smart clothes ; for I am afraid most of my sex (one cannot blame them for taking things as they find them) dress the window to the best advantage. And although the love that appears to be love at twentyfive may pass away, marriage is permanent and lasts rather a long time." In India, the prevailing system of Hindu marriages frankly recognises the truth contained in this extract. We recognise the transiency and the flimsy basis of early love quite as much as the permanency of marriage, and prefer to base our system of sex-union chiefly on the latter as its basis rather than the former. The parent's choice rests on important considerations having the lasting happiness of the married couple as its basis, and the object in view is almost always achieved, as we can easily judge from the almost universal experience of Hindus. Love, however, does not fail to appear, and grows with time and cultivation according to the measure of opportunities, and ripens to its maximum in the "green" of old age. In the West, there is much difficulty in making a wise choice. That seems to be the general experience. In this story itself, the female character from whom we have quoted the above extract goes on to recommend to the young man she is addressing that he should wait "sixteen or twenty years" before he marries, and gives her reason as follows:—"From the experience you should have gathered by then you should be able to choose wisely." This means that, in order to make "a wise choice" in marriage, one should wait till he reaches the age of 45. In a tropical country like India at least, this would be to pronounce sentence of death on all marriages and to instal immorality as the foundation of sex-union. Let us not be led into disaster and red ruin in our present blind worship of Western social ideals and practices. Let us ground ourselves in sound knowledge of the western social usage and its effects before we abandon the wisdom of the Hindu sages and the hoary institutions of the motherland.

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"We British are as dour and joyless as we are because our food is so abominably prepared."—This is chiefly because the servant difficulty has assumed almost infinite proportions in Great Britain. The British are the richest of all people in the world. The same industrial revolution that has made them rich beyond the dreams of avarice has also enabled them to dispense with cooking by the ladies of their households. The servant—unless he happens to be an Italian or a Frenchman well-trained in the culinary art— is only clever in the art of spoiling his master's digestion, and this is why the modern Britisher is not only phlegmatic from the favours bestowed on him by his climate, but also is usually ill-tempered and easily irritable.—In India, too, and chiefly among the Brahmins the servant trouble has attained the most unpleasant dimensions.

This is due mainly to the fact that the modern *educated* Brahman, so-called, does not like that his womankind should become a "cooking animal:" he thinks it the most degrading and disgusting of all occupations. But our ancient lawgiver—the greatest of the class—assigns cooking of food अन्नपाकं to the Hindu housewife as one of her most distinctive occupations. It is an undoubted fact that, in all orthodox Hindu families, the matron of the house not only loses none of her dignity by engaging in the culinary operation, but attains to a proficiency in it which is the despair of the professional cook and which is chiefly responsible for the endowment of all the inmates with uninterrupted health and cheerfulness. In the case of modernised and too highly "educated" Hindu, on the other hand, strong coffee and servant-cooked food combine to spoil health prematurely and to bring on disorders which bring life to a premature close. There is no reason why the modern Hindu wife should not take part in or at least give her careful work of superintendence to, the important work of preparing food for the members of the family of which she is still the ornament and the guardian angel. We think the blame rests not with her, but with her foolish husband who has been spoiled by his foreign education and whose head, otherwise empty enough in all conscience, is filled with unbounded vanity and conceit, even when the tongue has been well trained in the art of spouting forth what the heart does not feel or the head does not think out in full or comprehend in its entirety. The Hindu woman is still largely unspoiled and blameless. She can also easily be made to retrace her steps where she has been misled; and she is too often the unwilling instrument of her own ruin. Let us hope that she will yet save herself, even, if she fails to turn back her perverted husband from those paths of vainglory and those vitiated tastes and manners which surely prognosticate impending social dissolution quite as much as they carry with them the assurance of a rapid decline in personal health and happiness and of a premature sinking into the valley of the shadow of death.

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Essays on the Bhagavad-Gita.

[By the Hon'ble V. K. Ramanujachariar.]

(*continued.*)

II. Desirelessness.

(1) Desirelessness—Need Therefor.

Discrimination has been taught. It should be practised; but until the disciple's desires have been killed out, the practice will be impossible. For, his mind will ever recur to sense-objects, and

'To one who muses on sense-objects, attachment thereto springs up; from attachment arises strong desire; from strong desire anger comes forth'. (II. 62).

'From anger proceeds delusion; from delusion loss of memory; from loss of memory the destruction of *buddhi*; from this he perishes' (*ibid* 63).

Strong desire is the rendering of the Sanskrit term *Kama*—which is attachment fully developed, and which has reached the stage in which a person cannot remain without enjoyment of the sense-object desired. When the object is not attained, the desire becomes *anger* being directed against those who stand, or are supposed to stand, between the person and the object. *Delusion* is inability to distinguish between what is proper and what is improper. Under its influence the person does anything. *Memory* here is rememberance of the effort begun to obtain self-control. *Buddhi* is the determination that the power of discrimination shall be acquired. The self being eternal, the perishing is being once more plunged in *Samsara*—the wheel of births. *Kama* is the constant enemy of the disciple. Its mode of action is thus described in verses 38—40 of chapter III:

'As a flame is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as an embryo by the

amnion so are embodied beings enveloped by it (Kama)'—(III. 38).

'Enveloped is the knowledge of the sentiment Self by this constant enemy' (*Ibid*-39).

'The senses, the mind and buddhi are its tools; with these, enveloping the knowledge, it bewilders the dweller in the body' (*Ibid*-40).

The first illustration teaches that *kama* is born with us, coming with the tendencies developed in past lives; the second that though it may be subdued once, it comes back again and again; and the third that it cannot be subdued by one's own efforts. The term 'knowledge' in the second and third verses is knowledge of the self as imparted by the teacher. The word 'Sentient' is the rendering of the Sanskrit term *Jnaninah*, which indicates that by nature the Self is a conscious being, that his consciousness is unlimited, and that its limitation is due to a temporary cause. The term *buddhi* in the third verse refers to one's determination that such and such thing being desirable should be sought.

Kama is described as a very powerful enemy:—

'The senses are said to be powerful enemies; more powerful than the senses is the mind; more powerful than the mind is *buddhi* (determination); what is more powerful than *buddhi* is *Kama itself*' (III 42).

The senses are powerful enemies; for when they are occupied with sense-objects, one cannot think of his own real nature. When the senses are unoccupied, or are forcibly withdrawn from sense-objects, if the mind thinks of them, the same result happens. If there is a determination repugnant to the practice of discrimination, the quietude of the mind does not count for much; for it will soon be drawn in the direction of the detemination. Even if there be no determination inconsistant with the practice of discrimination, if *kama* exists, a determination will be formed under its influence, and the mind and the senses will become active. Hence *Kama* is the most powerful enemy.

(2) Practice of desirelessness.

The need for killing out *Kama* or desire thus becomes evident. The Lord therefore teaches

'Your business is with the action only; never with its fruits' (II. 47).

The disciple has therefore to confine his attention to the action only, and do it because it should be done, not because it will bring him this fruit or that. The next verse puts the teaching more clearly:

'Perform actions dwelling in *Yoga* and renouncing attachment; balanced evenly in success and failure, perform action; equilibrium is called *Yoga*' (*Ibid*-48).

The first term in the verse and the third quarter convey the same meaning. The verse is therefore broken up into three sentences in the translation. The first sentence giving the Vedic teaching, and the second explaining it. If the disciple is of the same mind in success and failure, (i.e.,) if he does not rejoice in success or grieve in failure, he has not been led by the desire for fruit. The attitude of mind which the disciple should adopt in the performance of action is called in the following verses *buddhiyoga*, *buddhi and Yoga.*

'Far lower is the action (aiming at fruit) than that performed in this attitude. Take refuge in this attitude, Miserable are they who work for fruit' (II. 49)

'One adopting this attitude abandons here both good and evil deeds. Therefore make efforts to maintain this attitude; for while actions are being done, it can be maintained only with great skill'.

Both good and evil deeds—the tendencies which the deeds created and developed in the past. Good deeds bind as well as evil deeds, by leading to the heaven-world and delaying perfection. In the matter of binding, fetters made of gold do not differ from iron fetters. The tendencies disappear by being starved. They are formed by enjoyment of fruits and are nourished by thinking of them. If no thought be bestowed on them, the tendencies become weaker and weaker until they die. The law on this subject is thus stated in. II. 59. "The sense-objects turn away from an abstemious dweller in the body."

(3) Motive for desireless action.

If the fruit of action should be aban-

doned, what is the motive for action; for fruit is the motive that impels worldly men to action.

The Lord has no doubt said—

'Do not be attached to inaction' (II. 47); but some motive should be found; and this is done in chapter III, verses 9—13.

'The world is bound by action, unless performed for the sake of *Yajna* or (Sacrifice)' (III. 9.)

At the beginning of the world the Lord instituted *Yajnas* (sacrifices) and said—' with these nourish the Devas (shining ones); they will nourish you; nourishing one another, you shall reap the supreme good (II. 11.)'

'For, nourished by sacrifice the shining ones shall bestow on you the enjoyments you desire' (*Ibid.* 12.)

'*The enjoyments you desire*'— not desired by the disciple for himself, for, he has no business with any fruits. They are desired only for making offerings to the Devas. The motive for action is thus to procure the materials for sacrifice and worship the Devas with them. It is therefore taught—

'One who enjoys what is given by Them without returning it to Them is verily a thief'. (*Ibid* 12).

How is the disciple to maintain his body?—

'The righteous, eat the remains of the sacrifice and are freed from all sins' (III. 13).

The disiciple should eat what remains after the offerings are made. One who cooks for his own sake is censured. In other words, the body should be regarded as a tool to be employed in the service of the Devas, and its maintenance will then become a part of the worship.

(4) Wheel of life.

To bring out the importance of *Yajnas* (sacrifices or worship of the Devas), the Lord describes a wheel;—

'From food beings become; from rain is the production of food; from sacrifice comes rain: from action arises sacrifice' (III. 14.)

'Know that from the body action comes; and the body from the imperishable Self. Therefore the body of every one ever depends on sacrifice' (III. 15).

The first two items are within every one's experience. The next item— that from sacrifice comes rain—is known from Scriptures. Action leading to sacrifice is the procuring of materials for sacrifice and preparing them for offering. The 'body' is the rendering of the Sanskrit term *brahman*. The term is used in chapter xiv. 3 to indicate *prakriti*, and the body, being made up of its modifications, may be called *brahman*. The body becomes capable of action when under the guidance of the Self it is fed and given rest. A body thus rendered serviceable may be said to come from the Self. Again, this body becomes from food; food from rain, rain from sacrifice, sacrifice from action; and action from the body energised by the Self; and so on in the same order. One who does not follow the wheel thus made to revolve is censured in the next verse. Hence every one should procure the materials for sacrifice, and make offerings; pleased with the worship the Devas will send rain; and rain will produce food; and food will give beings strength to act.

(To be continued.)

Sandhya Upasana.

[By Radnus B. Divard.]

Sandhya—The way to long life.

The love of life in every living thing is innate; even the lower animals of the animal kingdom vie with man in dexterously preserving their life from destruction resulting from things which their quick instincts help them to detect. The fear of losing one's life is, then, a factor common to the man and to the beast; but man is a thinking animal and as such is privileged to know why he was brought into being in this world; he has a right to have a full knowledge of the role he has to play on the stage of life. Why should one live at all is a question which occurs to the true man only, to the man who thinks and not to others who suffer themselves to be pulled down to the level of the brute through their negligence in exercising the organ of reasoning. Why should man live? This

question has been answered by different people in different ways. One set of people, who deny continuance of life after death as a result of their total disbelief in the existence of an eternal element known as soul in man, can but be expected, in the fitness of things, to declare enjoyment and pleasure as the object of life. Eat, drink and be merry is all that they can advise one to do. Another set of men who happen to be endowed with excellent understanding see things in a different light through their intellectual vision and pronounce the goal of life to be the union of the soul and the power that controls this universe. These people are termed as "believers." They firmly believe in the existence of the soul which they consider to be above change and mutilation. They likewise believe in the existence of an intelligent power which presides over the forces of nature and rules its kingdom which extends everywhere. This power is known in the language of religion as God. He is great and good. He rewards the virtuous and punishes the wicked. Virtue means implicit faith in and observance of His laws and wickedness means their violation. His laws have been revealed to pure souls and their teachings as conveyed in the scriptures put the soul on the right track and he who follows it without one false step is rewarded by Him. He who disregards these laws is eternally doomed. So man should not run after pleasures with a view to gratify his senses; he should devote his time in such a way as to secure heaven after the death of the body. This is the sum and substance of the Christian and the Mahomedan creeds. The Hindus, of course, believe in an omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent God, but they do not place Him in the awkward position of a merciful Being and at the same time the arbitrary author of all sorts of inequalities in this world; nor do they entertain the idea that a single life precipitates man into eternal heaven or hell. They are believers in the law of karma and reincarnation and in an eternal soul. The soul goes the round of births and deaths through its ignorance of its own nature and the aim of all scriptures is to bring about *self-realization* which can be achieved only in a human body. The Hindus, therefore, look upon the human body as the most valuable heritage of their past karma and try hard to gain the higher rung in the ladder leading to final emancipation of the soul. To them human birth is the most precious opportunity, and if this be lost, another round of births and deaths has to be gone through before the next opportunity offers itself. They believe in evolution as well as in involution. Darwin admits only evolution. His view is that the monkey can evolve the man but man, never the monkey; but the Hindus maintain that the man who misuses his opportunity of a human life offered to him has to revert to the life of a monkey or something equally bad. This is involution. Such being the case it becomes incumbent on all human beings to strain every nerve to make use of his life in such a way as to ensure his progress towards his ultimate liberation. It is also equally important to lengthen our life by every means within our reach so that death may not pounce upon us too suddenly and stand in the way of completion of our work. Is there any means to lengthen the life? If there be any, what a sweet thing it would be! To be sure, there is such a means but it is not certainly allopathy or homœopathy or any other "pathy." The creator allots a certain period of life to every person and he is given a free hand in the matter of shortening or lengthening it. Where does God keep a record of the life-periods of man. Certainly he cannot be expected to keep a register! He measures man's span of life by the number of times he breathes and fixes this number at his very birth in accordance with his past karma.

Works on Yoga state that a man breathes 21,600 times in 24 hours, and if this number could be brought down by the exercise of rigorous economy, life might obviously be lengthened. Violent exercise, long sleep, fits of anger and sexual enjoyment are some of the things which bring about the wastage of breath. These should therefore be avoided as far as possible; but since these cannot be entirely avoided, the exercise of pranayama is laid down by the

great Rishis with a view to make up for the loss involved. Pranayama means suspension of respiration. We have seen that a man's life is shortened or prolonged according to the number of breaths he spends. We have also seen that he breathes 21,600 times in a day. Now, if he can manage to breathe only once in 24 hours, he can utilize 21,600 breaths for 21,600 days or 60 years, that is to say his single day's life is prolonged by 60 years. Similarly if he can suspend his breath for 12 hours in a day his one day's life is prolonged by 30 years. A man who can remain in the state of Pranayama for one hour only has his life enhanced by 2½ years and by stopping breathing for one minute, his one day's life is prolonged by 15 days. A man who does only 3 Pranayamas in his Sandhya-Upasana gets his life extended by 21 days. Thus Pranayama, if performed methodically and scientifically is the surest means of long life: such is the experience of the Hindu sages of yore.

Every Brahman has to do pranayama thrice daily in his Sandhyavandanam and Sandhya Upasana is thus a means of long life. But alas! The modern average Brahman knows nothing more of Pranayama than the act of touching the nose and the ear with his right hand, at the same time muttering certain mantras about the meaning of which he is perfectly innocent. True Pranayama he does not know, nor does he care to know, and a veritable caricature of the solemn prayer is the result. What good can accrue from such mockery!

Besides Pranayama there are other mantras in Sandhya-Upasana which invoke the blessings of the gods in the shape of prosperity and long life and the gods to whom they are addressed, no doubt, confer on the devotee the boons prayed for. But there are some people, even amongst the Brahmans, who hold sceptical views about the efficacy of the mantras. They should however reflect a little before giving their verdict against the science of mantras. In every branch of modern science the truth is verified by experiment. Science does not want that one should blindly believe in its discoveries; but it does insist that he who wants to be brought face to face with its marvels should take the trouble of making the necessary experiments with utmost care to the minutest details. Exactly similar is the case of the science of mantras also. Every mantra has to be repeated a particular number of times in a particular place at a particular time and the person chanting it must subject himself to a particular type of self-mortification, so that his experiment may be successful. If any one of these is neglected or overlooked, failure will be the only evident result; but such failure is not sufficient to throw the blame on the science itself. In Chemistry, for instance, the failure of an experiment resulting from the carelessness of the person performing it is never attributed to the science; the scientific truth is never called in question; but the science of mantras, as any other Indian Science, stands anathematized to-day. It is designated as 'useless rubbish'; no wonder these are days of degeneration of Hindu science and culture. Another thing to be noted is that in all the modern sciences a discovery commands wide respect even amongst laymen at the very mention of the name of a great scientist. Doctor so and so has made such and such discovery and it must be right; nobody questions the truth of the discovery; they put their faith blindly even without attempting to experiment. The mere name of the scientist is sufficient warrant for the accuracy of his discovery. But ridiculously enough, most people would never dream of making any experiments in the science of mantras nor would they give credit to the discoveries made by the venerable sages of yore. Arrogance and self-complacence are things of the dark and where they reign a better vision of things must be impossible; these are not ashamed to present the Rishis to the world as no more than sophists and pretenders and liars! Rational beings, however, would admit that the science of mantra is a hoary one and originating, as it does, from the great Rishis does not deserve to be discarded simply because flippancy and vanity labels it as 'absurd.' Says the Nrisimhatapaniyopanishad:—"य एतं मन्त्रराजं नारसिंहमनुष्टुभं नित्यमधीते स मृत्युं तरति"।

'He who chants this king of mantras of Anushtubha metre pertaining to Nrisimha, daily, conquers death.' Says Patanjali 'स्वाध्यायादिष्टदेवतासंप्रयोगः' 'Mantras bring about union with the beloved shining one' Says Manu :—

यः स्वाध्यायमधीतेऽब्दं विधिना नियतः शुचिः ।
तस्य नित्यं क्षरत्येष पयोदधिघृतं मधु: ॥

'Installed in purity, he who chants the Vedic mantras for one year *scientifically* and *regularly*, the mantras confer on him profusely milk, curds, ghee and honey (i. e., prosperity of all description.)' These great Rishis declare the greatness of the mantras and their declarations are stamped as unreliable and silly ; but there are strong reasons for condemning anything that comes from them ; for, they did not hold University degrees nor were they conversant with English literature. Can wisdom and learning and greatness exist in a soul perfectly innocent of English literature and academical titles ? Impossible, absolutely impossible ! But here is the evidence of an English educated Hindu who held the degree of Master of Arts, leaving aside his other accomplishments. I mean Swami Rama Tirtha. He says "Monks living in the forests of the Himalayas chant *Om* or sing something else and play upon a musical instrument. Many times, snakes, deer, and wild beasts of the forests leave their places and come up to the side of the monks. Now, these wild animals understand nothing of the laws of music, nothing of the chanting of *Om*, still the effect is there. If the mere sound produces such a marvellous effect upon snakes and deer, cannot the mere sound chanted continually in the right time produce an effect in your life ?" This is his pronouncement on Pranava and it equally holds good in the case of other mantras.

To return to the subject, Sandhya contains mantras which have the power of securing long life. For instance in the Marjanamantra beginning with दधिक्राव्णो, there is a prayer for long life viz. प्रण आयूंषि तारिषत्, May He grant us long life. Similarly, in the Madhyanhika Sandhya of the Apastamba Sutra the concluding portion of the Upasthana Mantra asks for long life—पश्येम शरदश्शतम् &c., Again, the evening Upasthana Mantra of the same sutra specially invokes God Varuna for the blessing of long life. It begins with the words इमं मे वरुण. This mantra has a history of its own which deserves to be related here, though at the risk of tiring the patience of the readers.

In ancient times a great and pious king, Ambarisha by name, performed a big sacrifice ; but before the conclusion of the ceremony, the sacrificial animal was stolen away by God Indra. According to the Shastras the sacrificer of a yagna left incomplete draws on himself the wrath of the gods and if the sacrificial animal happens to be lost it must be replaced by a human creature and the ceremony carried on to its end. The king sought, in vain, for his animal, but he could find it nowhere. He was thus driven to the necessity of buying a human being for this purpose; but to get a man willing to sacrifice his life was next to impossible. He wandered throughout the length and breadth of his country and at last, quite disheartened by failure, met a sage Richika by name. This Richika had three sons all old; and king Ambarisha begged him to spare one of them for his sacrifice. Almost sure of meeting with a rebuff, the king was pleased beyond description when he learned that Richika could place at the king's disposal any one of his sons but the eldest. Richika's wife, however, would not part with the youngest one of the lot. Thus the middle one, Shunashepa, by name, finding, to his utter dismay, that he was the only one to whom the privilege of basking in the sunshine of parental love was denied, advanced and voluntered himself for the kings' service. Such is human nature; man can live without food but never without love! The king, elated at his unexpected success accepted the offer and started home with Shunashepa, after amply rewarding Richika with nuggets of gold and thousands of cows of the best breed. On their way they had to halt at a place where Viswamitra, a great sage, sat and performed austerities. This sage was Shunashepa's maternal uncle to whom

he flew and throwing himself down on his lap, cried: "Sir, I have neither father nor mother and am uncared for. I come to you for protection. Be you father to me and mother and save me from the claws of death." Vishwamitra listened to his story, consoled him and promised to shield him. The sage called his sons to his side and wanted them to put themselves in poor Shunashepa's place for being offered as a sacrifice.

They laughed jeeringly at these queer words and wondered how he could think of sacrificing his own sons, his own flesh and blood, for the sake of another being born of somebody else. His words were as good as asking them to eat the flesh of the dog. Vishwamitra was the last person to be played upon. His wrath was at once kindled and he pronounced a crushing curse on his own sons. Said he: "May you be doomed to the lot of the sons of Vasishtha who have been metamorphosed into chandalas or outcasts and may you live full one thousand years, on the flesh of the dog. This fierce scene was over, still he would not expose Shunashepa as a victim for the sacrifice. He revealed to him two Mantras (one of these begins with the words (इमं मे वरुण) and asked him to chant them when he stood tethered to the sacrificical post at the sacrifice. Shunashepa acted accordingly and the gods in their mercy blessed him and conferred on him long life and prosperity. They declared the sacrifice over, blessed the king and departed. Mantras call up the help of the gods and there is nothing in the world that they cannot bestow on man.

The Bhagavad Gita.

With an English Exposition

By K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.

(The substance of the lectures now being delivered at the Students' Sanatana Dharma Sabha Trichinopoly.)

ADHYAYA III.

(Continued.)

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।
यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥३८॥

As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as an embryo by the womb, even so is this (self.consciousness of the soul) enveloped by it (Kama or desire.)

NOTES:

1. The three illustrations represent different degrees of density of envelopment. Also, as Sri Desikar points out the first illustration shows that desire is co-existent as smoke with fire, constantly reverts as dust to the mirror, and envelops us so fully as the womb envelops the foetus that for release expert aid is necessary. Sri Madhusoodana explains another aspect. In the first stage desire is not so forceful just as smoke surrounds the fire but does not lessen its power to burn. In the second stage it is more powerful and dims the soul as dust dims the mirror and deprives it of its reflecting power. But the mirror is visible. In the third stage it is very powerful and grips and hides the soul, as the foetus is hidden and imprisoned. Sankarananda says that the Lord emphasises the difference between desire and wisdom. The former is dark, opaque, and inanimate; the latter is bright, transparent, and animate. The former colours the soul dark as smoke colours the fire dark; it destroys the transparency and reflecting power of the soul as dust destroys the same of the mirror; and it makes the soul lifeless as the amnion renders the embryo a helpless prisoner. Dhanapati says that the three illustrations show that desire prevents knowledge from revealing the Atman; it next prevents the seeing of things as they are, and it finally destroys discrimination. Sri Madhwa says that the illustrations represent the action of desire on three classes of souls. He quotes from Brahma Tarka:

तत्र कामः कालनेमिस्सर्वं धूममलोल्बवत् ।
शुभमध्याधमजनं क्रमादावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।
कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥ ३९ ॥

Knowledge is enveloped by this desire, which is the incessantly active foe of the wise. The desire is hard to fulfil and is insatiable.

NOTES:

1. Sri Sankaracharya says that desire

is the incessantly active foe of the wise man, for only the latter sees the operations of the enemy. The fool is under the domination of desire and knows nothing about the foe. In the case of this meaning, नित्यवैरिणा goes with ज्ञानिनः।

2. Or ज्ञानिनो may go with ज्ञानं and desire may be viewed as the enemy of all. But the former is clearly the better meaning.

3. The food अनल is used to mean insatiable or a flame. नाग्निस्तृप्यति काष्ठानां।

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते।
एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥ ४० ॥

The senses, the mind, and the will are said to be his seats; by means of these he deludes the jiva (soul) by veiling his wisdom.

NOTES:

1. Buddhi is the will, the region of concepts and determinations. Mind is the lower region of motor impulses and sensory impressions. The senses are the channels of knowledge. Kama goes through the outer gates and finally captures the port and then the citadel. Hence watch the gates. Each sensation of pleasure will not be an enemy but for the co-ordinating mind and will that remember and associate pleasures with objects under the sway of desire.

2. In connection with this we must remember the beautiful simile in the Kathopanishad about the soul being the owner of a chariot (viz., the body), the will being the charioteer, the mind being the reins, and the senses being the horses. In the Bhagavata (skandha IV Chapter 25) the Puranjanopakhyanam brings out the inter-relations of the soul and the senses in a telling way.

3. The Lord tells us the stronghold of the enemy so that we may kill him. Else he will trouble us again and again. Sri Madhvacharya says well: वधार्थं शत्रोरधिष्ठानमाह । हताधिष्ठानो हि शत्रुर्नश्यति ॥

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ।
पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥४१॥

Therefore, O chief of Bharatas, controlling first the senses, kill him (desire) who is sin and who is the destroyer of knowledge and realisation.

NOTES:

1. ज्ञान is book-learning. विज्ञान is realisation.

2. The purification of mind and will has to follow the control of the senses. Only then it will succeed.

(*To be continued.*)

Mr. Jadunath Sarkar and Shivaji's Caste.

[BY G. HARISCHANDRA ROW.]

(*continued.*)

Now, Shivaji seems to have been a Kshatriya:—

(1) We have the testimony of Ramdas who used to address him always as a Kshatriya. Was Ramdas a liar? His teachings to Shivaji remind one of Sree Krishna's teachings to Arjuna: both were asked to fight, for both were Kshatriyas. Ramdas did not choose to engage himself in war, for he was not a Kshatriya. His exhortation to Shivaji was, therefore, clearly based on the caste of that hero. Had not Ramdas regarded the Mahratta as a Kshatriya before he was "made a Kshatriya" by Ganga Bhat? Was not Ramdas present at the time of the Coronation? Had he known that Shivaji was really of a non-Kshatriya pedigree, the saint should not have been a party to this caste-making business; for he is admitted to have been an orthodox Brahman even by our critics.

(2) Shivaji himself was a believer in the caste-system, so also was his mother. How can we then believe that such persons sought to destroy it?

(3) The Rajas of Tanjore have been recognized as Kshatriyas by the people; and Shivaji who belonged to that family must have been a Kshatriya. Is there anything to show that those kings had been regarded as Sudras before Shivaji was made a Kshatriya by the Pandit of Benares? Or, can you say that the Rajas of Tanjore had been similarly manufactured into Kshatriyas by some unscrupulous Brahmans from Benares or Kumbakonam?

Or, did the transformation of a single person, Shivaji, miraculously change the whole race of Bhonslas into a different caste?

(4) Shahji, Shivaji's father, obtained the hand of Jiji Bhai, the daughter of Lukaji Jadavrao of Sinkhed. This nobleman was a Kshatriya; and so, Shivaji's father seems to have been a Kshatriya; Shivaji's mother also was a Kshatriya; and thus since his father and mother were of the Kshatriya caste, he belonged to the same caste. That Shivaji's father-in-law was a Kshatriya is admitted by Elphinstone who says "If any Mahratta had a claim to Rajput descent, it was the family of Jadu. The name is that of one of the Rajput tribes: it was borne at the first Mahomedan invasion by the Raja of Deogiri, the greatest prince in the Deccan; and it is not improbable that the protector of Maloji (who was a *deshmukh* of a district not far from Deogiri) may have been descended from that stock." (History of India, p. 602.)

(5) The Bhonslas had claimed to be Kshatriyas even before the birth of Shivaji; his claim therefore was not a new one: Mr. H. G Rawlinson, M. A., in his book *Shivaji, The Mahratta* (Clarendon Press) observes as follows—"Whence the Mahrattas originally came is by no means clear. Local legends connect them with the Rajput clan of the Rahtors with whom the ancient family of the Rashtrakutas, apparently on good grounds, claims kinship. Later clans, such as the Bhoslas, to which Shivaji belonged, also trace their origin to a Rajput ancestor. If this is true, the trace of Rajput blood in the veins of the Mahratta fighting classes may partly account for their valour and love of warfare" (p. 16.) Then again on page 25, the writer makes the following statement—"As we have already observed, Mahratta families liked to trace their descent to a Rajput ancestor. The family of Bhosle was not above this weakness. They claimed that the founder of their house, a certain Bhoshavant Bhosle, was a descendant of nothing less than the princely house of Chittoor, whose ancestors, in the troubled times of Alauddin, had migrated to the Dekhan." Mr. Rawlinson like Mr. Jadunath Sarkar who describes the Bhonslas as mere "tillers of the soil" doubts their origin: "Bhoshavant Bhosle, however, was merely a *patil* or village officer, of the district of Singanapur when we first hear of him and the story of his princely origin can hardly be regarded seriously." Circumstances may have made the Bhonslas patils and tillers of the soil; even now we find many Kshatriyas in occupations of a humble and peaceful nature; Mr. Rawlinson or Mr. Sarkar could not, therefore, rush to the conclusion that Shivaji's ancestors had not belonged to the Kshatriya caste. I do not know whether any of these writers has in his possession documentary evidence contradicting the traditional belief as to Shivaji's caste; but until such evidence is published we cannot but believe that Shivaji was a Kshatriya by birth.

Mr. Pavjee's Quest of Origins.

[BY K. S. RAMASWAMI SASTRI, B.A., B.L.]

Man from the beginning of times has been puzzled and fascinated by the problems of the far-off past and the far-off future, however much utilitarians and hedonists might seek to persuade him to lose himself in the present. His mind feels a sense of impotence and helplessness if the veil is not lifted from the distant past and the distant future, and his energy of work in the present also suffers by such sense of weakness. It seems to me that the removal of such helplessness, not by the flattery of delicious lies but by the revelation of the fulness of truth, is the best means of concentrated energy of service being attained by him in the present. Hence even the followers of the gospel of the practical life must take interest in knowing the truth about the ultimate origins, values, and consummations of life.

To us in India it is of special interest to learn how our great thinkers and seers have thought and felt on such matters. The Vedas contain clear indications that the Vedic seers knew and said that the earth slowly cooled down from a condition of incandescent igneous vapour. The Taittareya Brahmana shows how the igneous globe of gas became cooled down to a liquid state and then attained a solid state.

तस्मात्तपनाद्धूमोऽजायत । अग्निरजायत ।.........
स समुद्रोऽभवत् । सा पृथिव्यभवत् ।

Mr. N. B. Pavjee in his suggestive work on *The Vedic Fathers of Geology*, which contains much clear new thought clearly expressed showing our ancient scientific knowledge, as well as much of imaginary discovery of modern scientific thought in our ancient books, draws attention to the following passages in the Rig Veda:

या ओषधीः पूर्वा जाता देवेभ्यस्त्रियुगं पुरा ।
(Rig veda, X, 97, 1)

देवानां पूर्वे युगेऽसतः सदजायत ।
(Rig veda, X, 72, 2).

He says that these and other passages show that herbs sprang up before the gods and that this thought corresponds to the modern theory that the age of the *algæ* or seaweeds preceded that age of reptiles which preceded the age of mammals and man. In this respect as well as in his interpretation of the *Dasavataras* as indicating the procession of life from fish to man he does not seem to be rooted so much in fact as in speculation. The authorities and passages referred to by him are strained and twisted in strange ways. He is however entitled to our gratitude because he has shown to us how India was the home of the Aryans and how a branch of the Aryans went to the Arctic regions and came back after the glacial epoch. He has thrown new light on some very obscure chapters of terrestrial evolution and human history, though his researches have to be completed by later scholars without departing from the traditional interpretations of ancient texts to satisfy a natural but not praiseworthy ambition to see modern scientific truths expounded in Vedic texts.

A Tug at a Solo.

The electric lights on the Marina used to glow like a diamond necklace as I emerged from the imposing gates of the Fort. The official harness is enough to sap out the vigour of youth; an entrance into it sweeps off the cobwebs of imaginary happiness of an easy life; and a six months yoke steals away the bloom and the lustre in the face; and the Messenger of Death interrupts rather unkindly at least ten years in advance to shake hands with him and take him away. The brains become so dusty that not even a cyclone's velocity could refresh its cloisters ejecting the piles of papers and drafts inside.

There is nothing so pitiable or touching as the sight of an young man, working all day long bearing all the insults of a superior, panting and exhausted, returning to no home to cheer him, no children, nor wife, but to a miserable hotel and the confines of a solitary room in a strange place where the buzz of mankind whirls by regardlesss as stoic nature.

The Babel of tongues in a messing hotel is intolerable. Here is one joker and he has an admiring circle there. There is a pack of cards and a band is forming round it slowly one by one, as crows prepare themselves before a snatch at a scrape. And in one snug corner, sit armchair politicians tasting the latest dish of world news served to them and growing warm in their unavailing discussions. A continuous stream of guests goes in, spectre thin; it is crossed by another coming out: both laugh and talk and then depart. But I, for my part, have always preferred silence for clatter addeth vexation to the dejected spirit as to a sickman.

My landlord has a daughter learning songs. Her voice is only unusually rough and could not be mended into fine or finest modulations. She has an earnest tutor. While both of them tried to sing together, when it came to the highest pitch or climax, the tutor suddenly soared high and perched upon Olympus; but the poor girl was left stupified at the bottom, without wings, to keep him company. Feeling alone, he descended, and by way of a good start, pinched her red in the cheek, and tried then to sweep upwards with her, as a piece of iron is best beaten into shape when red-hot. In vain;—She stumbled; in her attempts there were jarring sounds, noise like pelting stones, and it appeared to all except those in the hotel, that a hundred were hotly engaged in the encounter, with pipes and timbrels as additional instruments or impliments(?)

The landlord was eager to see her a she-Orpheus thrilling the poising wave, freezing the distant stars, and melting the hearts of the world with her charming strains. But she made our hearts melt into pity for her. The tutor was anxious to do justice to the salt he ate. The girl knew these and was earnest too. But—!

This concert used to begin daily when I just stepped in melancholy, half-dead and completely weary. For some minutes quiet reigned; but, mind, it was only the calm before the storm. Her master pinched or beat her; and vainly climbed the Olympus or the Alps alone and froze himself there. Alarmed and enraged, the tutor punished her severely and goaded on to sing, she delightfully mingled sobs with the Solo. And then the modulations in her voice created by such sobs! her tears! with his increase in thrashing her, she confined herself to sobs pure and simple. The landlord attending to the customers at a distance, left them, and came to the scene enraged; the despairing tutor at his arrival, sat silent with red anger permeating within as molten lava. The father relieved him by taking the cudgel and reddening the donkey.—I mean the girl, the would be she-Orpheus—He poured a volley and the sobs heightened into loud brays and louder ones. That one in the superlative degree sent hurrying into the scene the Rickshawalla running with his vehicle in the the street. The cooly carrying rice bags stopped, laid the burden aside and enquiringly went within as if a murder had been committed. The sympathetic guests intervened and persuaded Hercules to drop down his club. Others drove out the pressing crowd of curious men. And daily the scene reached a climax and gradually cooled down.

Which worn out soul could suffer all these torments? Who would be in hell or in the Asylum of the insane. Still I have to put up, and I do.

V. R. HARI.

Olla Podrida.

Quite recently a lady doctor from the West said that the habit of the Hindus to wash the face and the hands before eating is a very good habit, and that it is not wise to fondle cats and dogs as this habit spreads diseases. So we want a certificate from the West to see the wisdom of our old habits. Better late than never!

* * *

The western doctors have found out also that fatness is due to poison in the blood and that it can be cured by taking uncooked things. We must accept everything from there as gospel. Be it so.

Signor Capablanca of Cuba is said to be a master chess-player playing a number of games simultaneously. We have many such men here and some of them are Satavadhanis or Ashtavadhanis. Yet they are unknown to fame as the newspapers do not take them up and sing their praises.

* * *

The Prince of Wales was recently dubbed by the American Indians as "Young Thunder" and "Morning Star." Different peoples have got different conceptions as to titles and honours. The Red Indians came to the ceremonial occasion clad in eagles' feathers and presented buckskin heads to the Prince. Loyalty fulfils itself in many ways!

* * *

The Cochin Catholics are setting up a hue and cry against the Civil Marriage Bill. But I forget that only orthodox Hindus are debarred by Hindu and other public opinion from objecting to civil marriage bills.

* * *

America is going in for a strike of 60000 steel workers. America is creating a corner in foodstuffs to raise prices. At this rate all the money of the world will go into America and rest of the world will be its slaves in fact though freemen in name. But America in its turn becomes a slave to strain and work and worry. Happy modern world!

* * *

Mr. Ford of America declared history to be *bunkum* and wants to re-edit the Bible. Wonderful man!

* * *

In India Conferences are going on everywhere. The Congress is coming on. India does not care for money or other worldly matters provided she has her opportunity to speak away somewhere and about something.

* * *

We read a few days ago about a gorilla having been humanised. Is it due to the principle of compensation?

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